

same offenders come not as afore is said, and the proclamation made and returned, they shall be convict and attainted of the riot, assembly, or rout aforesaid: And moreover the Justices of Peace in every county or corporation, where such riot, assembly, or rout of people shall be made, in case the same be made in their presence, or if none be present, then the Justices having notice thereof, together with the sheriff, under sheriff, or serjeant, of the same county or corporation, shall do execution of this act, every one upon pain of twenty pounds, to be paid to the Commonwealth, as often as they shall be found in default of the execution of the said act; and on such default of the justices and sheriff, under sheriff, or serjeant, a commission shall go from the General Court at the instance of the party grieved, to enquire as well of the truth of the case, and of the original matter for the party complainant, as of the default or defaults of the said justices, sheriff, under sheriff, or serjeant, in this behalf supposed, to be directed to sufficient and indifferent persons at the nomination of the Judges; and the said commissioners presently shall return into the General Court the inquests and matters before them in this behalf taken and found: But no persons convicted of a riot, rout, and unlawful assembly, shall be imprisoned for such offence by a longer space of time than one year. Persons legally convicted of a riot, rout, or unlawful assembly, otherwise than in the manner directed by this act, shall be punished by imprisonment and amercement, at the discretion of a jury, under the like limitation.

C H A P. XLIX.

An ACT forbidding and punishing AFFRAYS.

BE it enacted by the General Assembly, That no man; great nor small, of what condition soever he be, except the Ministers of Justice in executing the precepts of the courts of justice, or in executing of their office, and such as be in their company assisting them, be so hardy to come before the justices of any court, or either of their Ministers of Justice, doing their office, with force and arms; on pain; to forfeit their armour to the Commonwealth, and their bodies to prison, at the pleasure of a court; nor go nor ride armed by night nor by day, in fairs or markets, or in other places, in terror of the county, upon pain of being arrested and committed to prison by any Justice on his own view, or proof by others, there to abide for so long a time as a jury, to be sworn for that purpose by the said Justice, shall direct, and in like manner to forfeit his armour to the Commonwealth; but no person shall be imprisoned for such offence by a longer space of time than one month:

C H A P. L.

An ACT against CONSPIRATORS.

BE it declared and enacted by the General Assembly, That conspirators be they that do confederate and bind themselves by oath, covenant, or other alliance, that every of them shall aid and bear the other falsely and maliciously, to move or cause to be moved any enticement or information against another on the part of the Commonwealth, and those who are convicted thereof at the suit of the Commonwealth, shall be punished by imprisonment and amercement, at the discretion of a jury:

C H A P. L I.

An ACT against conveying or taking PRETENDED TITLES.

BE it enacted by the General Assembly, That no person shall convey or take; or bargain to convey or take, any pretended title to any lands or tenements, unless the person conveying or bargaining to convey, or those under whom he claims shall have been in possession of the same, or of the reversion or remainder thereof one whole year next before; and he who offendeth herein knowingly, shall forfeit the whole value of the lands or tenements; the one moiety to the Commonwealth, and the other to him who will sue as well for himself as for the Commonwealth: But any person lawfully possessed of lands or tenements; or of the reversion or remainder thereof, may nevertheless take or bargain to take the pretended title of any other person, so far and so far only as it may confirm his former estate.

C H A P. LII.

An ACT to punish BRIBERY and EXTORTION.

BE it enacted by the General Assembly, That no Treasurer, Keeper of any Public Seal, Councillor of State, Counsel for the Commonwealth, Judge, or Attorneys at law, practising either in the General Court, High Court of Chancery, Court of Appeals, Court of Admiralty, or Inferior Courts, Clerk of the Peace, Sheriff, Coroner, Escheator, nor any officer of the Commonwealth, shall, in time to come, take, in any form, any manner of gift, brokerage, or reward for doing his office, other than is, or shall be allowed by some act of General Assembly, passed after the institution of the Commonwealth; that is to say, after the fifteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord, one thousand seven hundred and seventy six; and he that doth, shall pay unto the party grieved, the treble value of that he hath received, shall be amerced and imprisoned at the discretion of a jury, and shall be discharged from his office forever; and he who will sue in the said matter, shall have suit as well for the Commonwealth as for himself, and the third part of the amercement.